



Audubon Society of Corvallis the **CHAT**

May 2013

VOL. 42

#9

General Meeting

May 16, Thursday, 7:00-8:30 pm
First Presbyterian Church
8th and Monroe

Benchmark Biology: The Oregon 2020 Birds Project

Douglas Robinson, Oregon State University



We stand at a pivotal time in history. Our climate is changing and native habitats are being converted for human use. Many of us care deeply about these changes but feel somewhat helpless fighting a never-ending battle. The news is not all bad. If we take a longer view, we have an opportunity now to greatly inform future generations regarding how biodiversity responds to

environmental changes. We are the first generation of humans who can easily measure, map, and electronically share and archive data on biodiversity. These gifts allow us to create a legacy of high quality information on the amounts and distributions of biodiversity on the planet, which can serve as benchmarks in time against which all future studies of biodiversity, decades and centuries from now, can be compared. In this talk I will introduce the Oregon 2020 birds project, a benchmark survey of the distribution and abundance of Oregon's birds. I will introduce the important role that citizen scientists can play by contributing their observations of birds.

Douglas Robinson is Mace Professor of Watchable Wildlife in the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife at Oregon State University. He was born and educated in Illinois, but has traveled the world studying birds. He is passionate about the importance of recognizing the value of our everyday observations of birds for future citizens and scientists. At OSU, he teaches two bird classes, wildlife ecology, and conservation genetics. His research focuses on how birds respond to environmental changes.

See you there!

Doors open at 6:30 pm for refreshments and visiting. The chapter meeting commences at 7:00 pm, followed by the guest lecture at 7:30 pm. Questions about the series can be directed to Dave Mellinger at David.Mellinger@oregonstate.edu or 541-757-7953.

Directions

The monthly chapter meeting is in Dennis Hall of the First Presbyterian Church, 114 SW Eighth Street.

Dave Mellinger

Field Trip Schedule

Local Monthly Second Saturday Field Trips

Our Saturday morning local field trip meets the second Saturday of every month at the Benton Center parking area, behind the Cannery Mall, 777 NW 9th St., Corvallis at 7:30 am. This field trip is geared towards beginning birders and birders new to Oregon's mid-valley area. Contact Bill Proebsting at proebstw@gmail.com or 541-752-0108 with questions. Check the Midvalley ListServ, www.midvalleybirding.org/pipermail/birding/, the week before the field trip for updates. Weather may alter plans. Watch the weather forecast and dress appropriately. Return to Benton Center by noon.

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Upcoming Field Trips

May 11 Finley NWR
June 8 Bald Hill Park
Sept 14 Resume Saturday half-day trips

Bill Proebsting

Weekend Field Trips

Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, May 23-26

ASC's signature trip to one of America's greatest birding destinations. A few openings are still available.

Summer and Crater Lakes, June 28-30

Our 2010 tour scored a rare Oregon swift trifecta: Black (Salt Creek Falls), White-throated (Fort Rock), and Vaux's. Add Snowy Plover, Common Poorwill, American Bittern, Gray-crowned Rosy Finch, and Yellow Rail and you understand that this is a special tour. The late-June weekend this year offers a better chance of having Crater Lake National Park open on our return. Maximum tour size: 16 persons. Currently the trip is full, but we can put you on a waiting list.

Wallowas, July 11-14

Spectacular mountain experience. We will visit Wallowa Lake, go up the Brown Mountain gondola to the high mountains, and explore The Nature Conservancy's Zumwalt Prairie Natural Area, Oregon's hot spot for raptors. We have two nights in Enterprise, and the final night in LaGrande, with access to Ladd Marsh Wildlife Management Area (Bobolink colony) and Spring Creek (Flammulated and Great Gray owls possible). Along the rivers there are chances for some eastern species: American Redstart, Red-eyed Vireo, and last year's trip included a group of Gray Catbirds at Hilgard Junction State Park. Maximum tour size: 24 persons. A few spaces still available.

Steens Mountain, August 8-11

Using Malheur Field Station as our base, we spend a day birding the high country of Steens Mountain, where we search for Gray-crowned and Black Rosy-Finches. Wildflowers will be abundant, and there are always surprise birds. We return (road conditions being favorable) through Hart Mountain and the Warner Valley.

Bandon return, September 6-8

The aim here is to hit Bandon Marsh National Wildlife Refuge and other south coast hot spots near the peak of the shorebird migration.

To secure spaces on any of these trips, contact Fred Ramsey at flramsey5@comcast.net or 541-753-3677.

Fred Ramsey

Bicycle Birding 2013 May through September, 2013

Note: We will be meeting at a different location for every trip.

Trips are free. Bring a bicycle helmet, water and binoculars. We ride slowly, listen for birds and stop frequently. Trip lengths are less than 10 miles. For more information, contact Don Boucher, 541-753-7689, bouchdon@peak.org

All trips are on the 4th Sunday of each month.

May – Sept., 9am - Noon

Sunday, May 26: E.E. Wilson Chat-o-Rama— north of Adair Village

Meet at E.E. Wilson Wildlife Area. Parking at E.E. Wilson requires a permit (see www.dfw.state.or.us/conservationstrategy/parking.asp). We'll start at the pheasant cage parking area, north of the road, 29555 Camp Adair Rd, Monmouth, OR (map: <http://goo.gl/maps/4rH6f>). Consider parking for free at Adair County Park (get there 20 minutes early) and riding the 2.8 miles north to E.E. Wilson.

Sunday, June 23: Willamette Park/Kendall Natural Area—Corvallis

Meet at the Crystal Lake Sports Fields/boat landing parking area at 1199 SE Fischer Ln. (map: <http://goo.gl/maps/GgJMy>)

Sunday, July 28: Sunset Park in Corvallis to Philomath and back

Meet at Sunset Park, SW 45th St. & Country Club Dr. in Corvallis. Includes a short walk down the Sunset Park wetland boardwalk. (map: <http://goo.gl/maps/GUfBH>).

Sunday, Aug. 25: Albany Bike Trails— Meet at Monteith Park in downtown Albany

There's a parking area at the corner of Water Ave. and Washington St. (map: <http://goo.gl/maps/b9CXN>)

Sunday, Sept. 22: Benton County Fairgrounds, Bald Hill Park and Campus Way Covered Bridge—Corvallis

Meet at the Benton County Fairgrounds near the intersection of 53rd St. and Reservoir Ave. (map: <http://goo.gl/maps/a6nbi>)

Don Boucher

President's Corner

Pat Wray's recent "Be Careful What You Say, Especially About Cats" (Corvallis Gazette-Times, March 28, 2013) deserves great credit for standing up both for the protection of wild birds, and for free-lance journalists like Ted Williams, who often writes probing and insightful articles for Audubon magazine. Pat accurately nails the almost absurd sanctity of cats in our society, even within Audubon Society memberships. Ted was dismissed from Audubon's editorial staff for separately encouraging feral cat control in the Orlando Sentinel. Soon after many others and I received an explanation of the dismissal from National Audubon President David Yarnold. Fortunately Ted Williams is now apparently back.

Does the internal dilemma faced by bird lovers who send their favorite cat or dog outdoors to sport with local wildlife and to sometimes supplement their diet, tell us how inconsistent we can all be about who or what has a "right to life"? Does the recent Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute study showing a loss to feral cats of 1.4 to 3.7 billion birds annually (and many more mammals) help settle that personal dilemma for anyone? Do spay/neuter and release programs for feral cats seem any more "humane" than taking personal responsibility for contributing to the loss of so many birds and mammals when reintroducing

a sterilized cat into the wild?

We'll continue to explore the many human threats to birds, from wind generation and window strikes, to night-time lighting, polluted waters, and predation by pets. The best part of these threats is knowing they all have some actionable solutions, the worst is witnessing our collective inability to act.

Jim Fairchild

Hesthavn News

Come support our nature center, participate in some of our restoration work, and help to make it the best facility we can for Michelle's education programs. We call them "work parties" and that's probably not the most enticing description. But I think most people who come enjoy the time spent there. It is a beautiful place, and it is a good cause. SO.... there will be monthly ...um ...work parties at Hesthavn through the summer. All will be on Saturdays from 9 am to 1 pm. If my work party dates don't work for you, but you would be willing to come out on your own time drop me a line (raydrapek@gmail.com) and we can talk about the kinds of things you might do.

Hesthavn Work Parties Work party dates:

May 18, June 15, July 20, and August 24.

Raymond Drapek

Atop the Nestbox

The bluebird nesting season is well under way. We have one very early brood that will fledge this week near Lebanon. Most other nests are in the egg-laying or incubating stage, however, there are some birds that haven't yet become serious about nesting. Please remember to look for leg bands and report to us any colors you see through July: Raylene Gordin at 541-258-6625 or gordin@centurytel.net or Rita Snyder at 541-752-6457 or rsnyder14@msn.com.

Raylene Gordin

Spring Migratory Bird Count

The 2013 Spring Migratory Bird Count for Benton County is scheduled for Sunday, May 12th. The North American Migration Count (NAMC) is like the Christmas Bird Count, but more casual. The area is not a 15-mile diameter circle but an entire county. On the day of the count you can bird whenever and wherever you wish and there is no fee to participate.

The count has been designed so that it is outside everyone's house, and not limited to defined circles. After all, migratory birds are everywhere and should be of concern to everyone. But you should remember to count all the birds (not just migrants). Participation by ALL birders, irrespective of skill or style, is encouraged. So whether you just count the birds in your yard, visit a favorite spot for an hour or two or spend the entire day birding, I would appreciate a report from you. Please provide a count for each bird seen, listed by location (this way, I can amalgamate counts from the same location such as Cabell Marsh, Philomath Sewage Pond, etc.). Also provide the amount of time spent birding and mileage broken down by method of transportation (i.e. foot, car, bicycle, etc.).

If possible, please let me know ahead of time if you plan to participate. Also feel free to ask me any questions. I can be contacted at marciafcutler@comcast.net or 541-752-4313.

Marcia F. Cutler

Finley Wildlife Refuge

Open House

Saturday, May 11th – 10am – 3pm

Join us at William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge for a day full of adventure and activities. Start your journey at the Complex Headquarters near Bellfountain Road, or from the east entrances at Prairie Overlook or McFadden's Marsh near Hwy. 99W. Pick up your Wildlife Passport and continue through the designated stations earning your stamps. Learn how fire can help wildlife. Look back to a time before Oregon became a state with a tour of the historic Fiechter House. Learn about local wildlife from the Audubon Society of Corvallis. See how experts take photographs of wildlife! Watch how horses are used to remove logs in sensitive areas on the Refuge. Catch a glimpse of raptors above the open fields or blooming native wildflowers.

Take a guided Behind the Scenes tour with Refuge staff at 10am, 12pm or 2pm. (**registration required** – sign-up ahead of time by calling [541-757-7236](tel:541-757-7236)). Restroom facilities and light refreshments (while supplies last) will be available. Present your stamped Wildlife Passport, and select from several mementos to take home. Keep a look out for the Blue Goose!

Meeting Location: Fiechter House, south on 99W to mile marker 93; follow signs for Finley Refuge; after crossing Muddy Creek look for parking area on left by Homer Campbell Trail

Contact information: Molly Monroe ([541-757-7236](tel:541-757-7236))

Sponsor: USFWS William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge

Molly Monroe

Natural Areas

Celebration Week

May 4th-12th

The Corvallis Sustainability Coalition in conjunction with their many partners invites the public to participate in a **Natural Areas Celebration Week**. Free events will occur daily to celebrate the natural areas in and around Corvallis. The functions vary from interpretive nature walks to photography workshops to volunteer work.

For a full listing of events, including meeting locations, contact information, RSVP info, and event descriptions, go to: www.sustainablecorvallis.org and see the News & Events page.

Molly Monroe

Field Notes

3/29/13 – 4/25/13

The general area covered by the field notes is a rough circle centered on Corvallis, extending just past Lebanon, Monroe/Harrisburg, Marys Peak and the nearby Coast Range, and Monmouth/Dallas.

Migration was in full swing this period, with warblers swarming through the trees and new species arriving almost daily. Leaves unfurled and flowers bloomed, and a few dragonflies and butterflies even ventured out on warm, sunny days.

Location abbreviations: Ankeny = Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge, EEW = E.E. Wilson Wildlife Area, Finley = William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge, LSNA = Luckiamute State Natural Area, Philomath STP = Philomath sewage treatment ponds, Stewart Lake = pond on Hewlett-Packard campus in Corvallis

Observer abbreviations: Don Boucher (DB), Howard Bruner (HB), Randy Campbell (RCa), Pam Comeleo (PCo), Randy Comeleo (RCo), Marcia F. Cutler (MFC), Preston Filbert (PF), Jeff Fleischer (JFI), Mary Garrard (MG), Joel Geier (JG), Roy Gerig (RG), Julie Gibson (JGb), Jeff Harding (JHa), Oscar Harper (OH), Susie Hatlevig (SH), Phil Henderson (PH), Hendrik Herlyn (HH), Carol Hiler (CH), Tim Johnson (TJ), Erik Knight (EK), Aaron Liston (AL), Sara Liston (SL), Mary Luke (ML), Lisa Millbank (LM), Russ Namitz (RN), Nancy Neary (NN), Lars Norgren (LN), Pam Otley (PO), Bill Proebsting (BP), Paul Rentz (PR), Doug Robinson (DR), Steve Seibel (SS), Jamie Simmons (JS), Margaret Stephens (MS), Jay Withgott (JW), Will Wright (WW)

Greater White-fronted Geese moved north in enormous flocks, both day and night, starting in the third week of April and continuing for most of the next week. One **Snow Goose** was at Finley 4/7 (EK). A **Ross's Goose** was found at Ankeny 4/18 (RG), presumably this same bird was seen for a few days, and a second was found nearby 4/21 (RG). **Canada Geese** (Western subspecies) had good-sized goslings at Ankeny by 4/23 (MS). **Cackling Geese** were amassing in huge flocks for their northward journey, and were beginning to dwindle in numbers by the end of the period. The last reported **Tundra Swans** were at McFadden Marsh at Finley 4/1 (WW). Numbers of ducks were fluctuating as migrants arrived and departed, but tended to decline overall this period. 2 **Gadwall** were found at Finley 4/7 (EK), and 2 were at Cheadle Lake in Linn Co 4/19 (RN). 1 male **Eurasian Wigeon** was with **American Wigeons** at Finley 4/3 (HH, OH, PH), another was at Ankeny 4/8 (TJ) and may have been the same one seen 4/21 (JW), and 1 lingered at Stewart Lake through 4/12 (JS). Newly-hatched **Mallard** ducklings swam with their mother at Owens Farm Natural Area wetland 4/21 (DB, LM). A notable influx of **Cinnamon Teal** were noted at McFadden Marsh at Finley 4/9 (WW), with at least 16 present. The high count for **Northern Shovelers** was 188 at Philomath STP 4/8 (HH). One male **Northern Pintail** stopped at Stewart Lake 3/28 (JS), an unusual occurrence there. There were 200 **Green-winged Teal** and 100 **Ring-necked Ducks** at Finley 4/7 (EK). A lone female **Canvasback** was at Stewart Lake 4/1 (JS), and another female was at Philomath STP 4/6 (HH). 113 **Lesser Scaup** were at Philomath STP 4/8 (HH), and 101 **Bufflehead** also bobbed on the brown lagoons 4/6 (HH). 1 male and 7 female **Hooded Mergansers** landed at the pond along Bruce Rd at Finley 3/30 (PO). The high count for **Ruddy Ducks** this period was 103, including one abnormally dark male (HH).

A **Ruffed Grouse** drummed along the Homer Campbell trail at Finley 4/7 (EK), and another was heard at Beazell Memorial Forest near Wren 4/24 (JGb). 2 **Wild Turkeys** were at the W end of Bruce Rd near Finley 4/3 (HH, OH, PH), and one tom was gobbling at Bald Hill Park 4/9 (HH). A covey of about a dozen **California Quail** turned up in a SW Corvallis yard 4/21 (NN).

A **Pied-billed Grebe** was calling at EEW 4/11 (LM). An exceptional influx of **Eared Grebes** occurred this period, with many reports from area wetlands, but an incredible 36 turned up at Philomath STP (DR).

A flock of 30 **American White Pelicans** were gliding north over Finley 4/23 (BP).

2 **American Bitterns** made their "pumping" call at the Bruce Rd pond at Finley 3/30, and at least one continued to be reported throughout the period. **Great Egrets** were still being

seen at Finley 4/12 (PR), but most were headed toward their breeding areas by the beginning of the period. **Green Herons** were showing up (although a couple of overwintering birds had been reported), with one at Stewart Lake 4/1 and sporadically throughout the period (JS), and a male along Marys River in Corvallis 4/5 (LM).

Turkey Vultures were foraging on the ground, seemingly catching insects, at Bald Hill Farm 4/2 (JG). Soon after their arrival at the end of the last period, **Ospreys** were back on their nests all over the area. A couple of Ospreys were "welcomed" back by a **Bald Eagle** intent on stealing a fish one of them was carrying at EEW 4/11 (LM). 2 male **Northern Harriers** were escorted out of a cattail marsh by angry Red-winged and Yellow-headed Blackbirds at the pond on Bruce Rd at Finley 4/18 (PR). Only one **Sharp-shinned Hawk** was reported this period; it was at Willamette Park 4/18 (HH). A courting pair of **Cooper's Hawks** were interrupted by a second male chasing them 4/9 (HH). The **Red-shouldered Hawks** nesting at Starker Arts Park in Corvallis began incubating in mid-April (DB, LM), and **Red-tailed Hawks** were also on nests. While most **Rough-legged Hawks** had moved north by the beginning of the period, one was near Peterson Butte 4/4 (SS), and one was E of Ankeny 4/21 (RG).

Virginia Rails and **Soras** were both calling from the pond along Bruce Rd at Finley 3/30 (PO), and Soras were subsequently reported from most area wetlands over the next few weeks. One **Sandhill Crane** flew over Cabell Marsh at Finley 4/23 (BP).

A Black-bellied Plover or a Pacific Golden-Plover may have been seen on Seven Mile Drive 4/14 (CH), but was not identified definitively. A pair of **Killdeer** at Philomath STP were very vocal, and there was a freshly hatched eggshell nearby, although no chicks were seen 4/6 (HH).

Some Wetland Reserve Program lands along Riverside Dr in Linn Co attracted 60 **Greater Yellowlegs** 4/3 (DB), and there were at least 65 at Finley 4/3 (HH, OH, PH). 2 **Lesser Yellowlegs** were at Finley 4/7 (MFC), 1 turned up at the Riverside Dr wetlands 4/17 (DB), and one was at Finley 4/21 (JW). **Solitary Sandpipers** began to turn up at the end of the period, with the first one reported from Sunset Park in Corvallis 4/23 (LM), and numbers there rose to 5 on 4/25. **Spotted Sandpipers** did not seem widely common yet. A flock of about 50 **Western Sandpipers** were at the Riverside Dr wetlands 4/25 (DB), but **Least Sandpipers** were reported much more frequently from area wetlands. A **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was found along Finley Rd 4/25 (DR). Large flocks of 200 **Dunlin** were reported from Finley 4/3 (HH, OH, PH), and from Riverside Dr 4/5 and 4/9 (DB). 40 **Long-billed Dowitchers** at Finley 4/7 was the highest count reported this period, along with 50 **Wilson's Snipe** (EK).

A very early **Red-necked Phalarope** turned up at Philomath STP 4/6 (DR).

There were no reports of gulls/terns this period.

About 15 **Band-tailed Pigeons** perched in a tree near 35th St in Corvallis 4/15 (SH).

A **Western Screech-Owl** was found at Willamette Park 4/14 (JS), a reliable spot for them. A pair of **Great Horned Owls** sang a duet in NW Corvallis 4/7, and some fledglings are out of the nest by now. A **Short-eared Owl** was hunting the fields near the Corvallis Airport 4/14 (LN).

Vaux's Swifts turned up in Corvallis 4/20 (HH, OH, DB, LM) and were soon spotted at some of their usual roosts such as Wiegand Hall at OSU 4/21 (MG). 2 **Anna's Hummingbirds** were on nests within about 50 yards of one another at Willamette Park/Kendall Natural Area 4/13 (BP). A female **Calliope Hummingbird** visited a Corvallis feeder 4/13, until she was chased away by a much larger Anna's (HH), and another Calliope visited a garden along Oak Creek 4/17 (BP). A male **Rufous Hummingbird** displayed for a female at EEW 4/11; she seemed to be collecting spiderwebs for nesting material (LM).

Some **Belted Kingfishers** were moving from their winter territories to breeding areas this period, one stopped at Stewart Lake 4/24 after a 2-month absence (JS).

Red-breasted Sapsuckers were easily found as they performed their unique "syncopated" territorial drumming. At least 5 **Downy Woodpeckers** were at Willamette Park 4/18 (HH). Many **Northern Flickers** were departing our area this period as they headed for higher elevations and colder climates north and east of our area. A **Pileated Woodpecker** at Stewart Lake 4/16 was the first one noted by the observer since 2002.

American Kestrels appeared to be nesting at Stewart Lake this period (JS). One **Merlin** was seen at Finley and another was at Bald Hill Park 4/23 (BP), and perhaps the same individual from Bald Hill was seen across 53rd St the next day (HH, OH). An adult **Peregrine Falcon** was at Peterson Butte 4/5 (SS).

A **Hammond's Flycatcher** turned up at Willamette Park 4/20 (DB, LM), and one was also near Peoria (RCa). Another Hammond's turned up at EEW 4/21 (DB, LM), and one more was just W of there the next day (JG). 2 **Pacific-slope Flycatchers** were reported from the Oak Creek entrance to McDonald Forest 4/25 (BP). A pair of **Black Phoebes** at Eagle Marsh at Ankeny seemed to be building a nest 4/21 (RG). One **Western Kingbird** was at Bald Hill Park 4/23 (BP), and 1 was seen near the end of the period in Scio (ML).

Hutton's Vireos were busy singing their monotonous little songs throughout the period. A notably early **Cassin's Vireo** turned up across from the OSU Dairy Barn 3/30 (AL, SL), but one following a more normal schedule was singing NE of Fitton Green 4/19 (RCo). A **Warbling Vireo** was seen at Finley 4/23 (BP) and another was singing along Riverside Dr in Linn Co 4/25 (DB).

Female **Steller's Jays** and **Western Scrub-Jays** were incubating during the period. A pair of **American Crows** finished nest construction in a small pine in S Corvallis around the middle of the period.

Horned Larks were found along Blatchford & Glaser Rds W of Lebanon 4/15 (JF1).

Cliff Swallows had returned to most of their colonies by the beginning of the period, and **Barn Swallows** were widespread. Pairs of **Tree Swallows** and **Violet-green Swallows** competed with Western Bluebirds for a nest box W of EEW 4/24 (JG). 2 **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** at Willamette Park 4/25 were the only ones reported this period (HH).

Some **Black-capped Chickadee** babies had already fledged by the middle of the period. **Chestnut-backed Chickadees** were almost entirely absent from feeders and urban areas this period as they moved to coniferous forests. 2 **Bushtit** nests were spaced about 60 yards apart near the Marys/Willamette confluence in

Corvallis (LM).

White-breasted Nuthatches were nesting at Stewart Lake this period (JS).

An early-arriving **House Wren** was at Finley 4/3 (HH, OH, PH). While **Marsh Wren** numbers were augmented with new arrivals, **Pacific Wrens** had largely left wooded parks and other lowland areas by the beginning of the period.

Golden-crowned Kinglets were moving away from valley locations this period. **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** were conspicuous migrants during the first half of the period, but were almost all gone by the end. **Western Bluebirds** were carrying twigs into a nest box W of EEW by 4/9 (JG). A single **Townsend's Solitaire** showed up between Lebanon and Crabtree 4/13 (JHa). **Hermit Thrushes** were inconspicuous migrants throughout the period, with several present in McDonald Forest and EEW 4/21 (DB, LM), but almost all **Varied Thrushes** had left the valley floor for coniferous forests. Many **American Robins** began nesting during this period.

A **Wrentit** turned up SW of Stewart Lake 4/12, in an unusual location where they had not been observed before (JS). **European Starlings** were tending to their nestlings and constantly raising alarm calls about passing American Crows this period. About 36 **American Pipits** were along Riverside Dr in Linn Co 4/22 (DB). Nomadic **Cedar Waxwings** were a fairly common sight around wetlands and rivers this period.

Tremendous numbers of **Orange-crowned Warblers** and **Yellow-rumped Warblers** were migrating through our area from early April through the end of the period. These were joined by a few **Nashville Warblers** on 4/20, 2 in a yard W of EEW (JG) and 1 in downtown Corvallis (DB, LM). 2 **Yellow Warblers** were along Bruce Rd at Finley 4/25. An early **Black-throated Gray Warbler** passed through Corvallis 4/4 (HH), though the next report was a week later at EEW (LM). A **Townsend's Warbler** was singing on the OSU campus 4/1 (DB). A **MacGillivray's Warbler** along Oak Creek 4/25 was the first report this spring. **Common Yellowthroats** were arriving as early as 3/30 (DR), and within a week were easily found by their singing and "rubber band" calls. 1 **Wilson's Warbler** was singing at LSNA 4/17 (JG). A rare, male **Palm Warbler** was found at Ankeny 4/15 (JHa).

2 **Western Tanagers** were at Monteith Park in Albany 4/25 (PF).

A male **Spotted Towhee** performed a display while carrying nesting material in his bill 4/20 (DB, LM). A **Chipping Sparrow** arrived just W of EEW 3/31 (JG), and by mid-April, they were being reported widely. A **Vesper Sparrow**, a species of special concern in our area, showed up at Bald Hill Park 3/31 (PCo, RCo) and continued to be reported there, and 3 were at Peoria 4/14 (RCa). **Savannah Sparrows** were singing from grassy fields all over the area. A light-colored "Sooty" **Fox Sparrow** W of EEW 4/25 was likely a migrant from south of our area (JG). **Golden-crowned Sparrows** and **Lincoln's Sparrows** were also passing through on migration and soon to be absent from our area until next fall. At least 5 or 6 **White-throated Sparrows** were still at EEW 4/11 (LM).

The first **Black-headed Grosbeak** reported in our area was at Willamette Park 4/25 (HH). An early **Lazuli Bunting** was reported from Finley 4/17 (HB).

Among the **Red-winged Blackbirds** and **Brewer's Blackbirds**

feeding along Finley Rd 4/23, were 2 **Tricolored Blackbirds** (DR), quite rare in our area. A male **Yellow-headed Blackbird** performed his infamous song at the pond along Bruce Rd at Finley 4/3 (HH, OH, PH), and was reported sporadically this period. **Western Meadowlarks** continued their liquid singing at the Finley prairies. A **Brown-headed Cowbird** was singing along Campus Way 4/8 (LM). The first reported **Bullock's Oriole** was at Peoria 4/25 (RCa).

It's been a strange year for finches. **Red Crossbills** have continued to be very common in Corvallis and Albany this period, but **American Goldfinches** are just now returning from their unexplained winter absence. The annual influx of **Evening Grosbeaks** on the OSU campus is now well underway. One partner of a **Pine Siskin** pair picked up a strand of hay and, with the mate, carried the hay into a stand of Douglas-firs 4/13 (JG). A clutch of **House Finch** eggs were laid in mid-April in S Corvallis.

Please post your reports to midvalleybirding.org, send them to lisaaves@peak.org, or leave a message at 541-753-7689 by 5/23/13.

- Lisa Millbank

ASC Board Elections 2013

The Board of Directors of the Audubon Society of Corvallis is offering the following slate of candidates for serving in the 2013/2014 term, which begins at the summer board meeting. Elections will be held at the May 16th general meeting.

President—Jim Fairchild has served ASC as a Board member, Conservation Chair, and previously as President. Jim is a self-employed woodworker, forest manager, and a committed forest conservationist. He and Karan enjoy hiking, birding, gardening, and pursuing nature studies and restoration projects. His long experience in the Corvallis City Watershed has led to the installation of over \$750,000 of fish passage and stream improvements for Rock Creek.

Vice President—Chris Mathews retired as Chairman of the OSU Department of Biochemistry/Biophysics in 2002. He moved to Corvallis from Tucson, Arizona 35 years ago. He has served ASC as Vice-President and President. Since his retirement, he and Kate continue to be very active with community organizations, and also travel extensively.

Treasurer—Fred Ramsey co-founded ASC in 1970, was its first president, and served in this position again in the 1980s. He is currently Treasurer. Fred has led the weekend field trips since 1971, edited the *Chat* and served in many other positions over the years. As a world-traveled and respected ornithologist, his other interests include music, theatre, fishing and baseball. Fred is also Professor Emeritus of Statistics at OSU. His many publications include *Birding Oregon*, one of the first site guides, which was published by ASC in 1978.

Secretary—Linda Campbell moved back to her home valley after 25 years of living on San Juan Island. She works for Oregon Department of Fisheries and Wildlife and takes frequent long rambles in the woods where she lives, along the Mary's River. Linda was instrumental in securing the completion of the Homer Campbell Trail at Finley Wildlife Refuge, the first year-round accessible trail on the refuge. She has served ASC in many capacities over the years.

Members-at-large

Gail Nickerson is a native Oregonian who has lived in Corvallis most of her life. Upon retirement from OSU (as a hop chemist) in 2003 she joined the Audubon Society of Corvallis. She volunteered for the refreshment committee because she likes to bake. She has been an at-large member for three years.

Teri Engbring retired shortly before moving to Corvallis with spouse and retired USFWS biologist, John, in January, 2012. She is a native of Vancouver, WA who worked as a planner, journalist, program manager, speechwriter, volunteer coordinator and educator from Seattle to New York City, Honolulu to Washington, DC. in her 40 year career. Before moving to OR, she worked for the state and private non-profits for 12 years as an environmental educator in Davis, CA. She is proud mom to daughters Laurel (an osteo-archaeologist in Davis) and Gretchen (an environmental policy-sustainability specialist near Boston). An ASC education program volunteer for the past year, she enjoys birding (with all ages), hiking, photography and other arts, and loves to travel and entertain visiting friends and family.

ShyAnne Woods—Being raised by a naturephilic mother and coming of age in the Willamette Valley has allowed me to realize that the natural world is what holds us all up. Its beauty and mystery invite us all to learn, love and live in appreciation of it. As a natural resources student of Oregon State university and ASC Member-at-Large, I hope to be an instrument of change for conservation efforts everywhere. In my free time I love to spend time with family, look for birds and blooms, and hope to share this passion with children and community members of Corvallis.

Stacy Moore obtained a B.S. in Wildlife Biology and a Secondary Science Teaching Certificate from Oregon State University. She has an M.S. in Environmental Education from Southern Oregon State University. She currently works as Ecological Education Director at Institute for Applied Ecology in Corvallis and as an Academic Advisor for Environmental Sciences at OSU.

Peter Moore was born in New Zealand and obtained his Wildlife Biology Degree and honors thesis on white-faced herons at Victoria University. He worked 27 years for the Department of Conservation in New Zealand where he specialized in studies on penguins, oystercatchers and albatrosses. He currently works as a Habitat Restoration Ecologist for the Institute for Applied Ecology in Corvallis.

Will Wright has served as ASC President and is a 3rd/4th grade teacher. He has been a teaching interpretive naturalist at Mt. St. Helens, biology instructor for O.M.S.I., instructor at Camp Hancock, Outdoor School, and staff member for Puffin Project in Maine for National Audubon Society. He spent one year following Spotted Owls with radios; two seasons doing cavity nesting bird surveys; and four seasons doing Marbled Murrelet surveys. He has travel experience for birding and education in Alaska, Canada Mexico, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Panama, Ecuador, Hawaii, Japan, India, Nepal, Kenya, and Europe.

Alternate—Karan Fairchild is currently a member at large and has been involved with the Audubon Society of Corvallis for over 25 years. She's served in many capacities during that time, including member at large, secretary and fundraising chairperson. She instigated the successful Birdathon fundraisers, and is currently on the bylaws committee, nominations committee, Homer Campbell award committee, Hesthavn committee, and serves in several other functions.

Karan Fairchild

CollidEscape BirdProtection

The precut CollidEscape bird protection material arrived in a tube at my door, sized and ready to install. My picture window is near our bird feeder, and in spite of applying bird decals and other window markings, it still receives bird strikes. It is estimated 50 million bird deaths occur each year in North America due to collisions with glass. The Mylar CollidEscape goes on glass easily after applying water to allow it to slide. The adhesive dries in a few days and will last many years. From inside the view is normal with perhaps, a little tint. From outside the window looks painted and has no reflection or depth. I will carefully observe the results of this window covering during the next few weeks and report back. My initial feeling is quite good and no bird impacts have taken place so far. To learn more about CollidEscape check the website CollidEscape.org. Happy birding.

John Gaylord

Fraser Family Gives Memorial Donations to ASC Bluebird Trail

Robert (Bob) Fraser and his wife Ina volunteered their services to the Audubon Society of Corvallis' Bluebird Trail in 1987. They monitored Western Bluebird nest boxes on a weekly basis from March through August, maintained concise records, and assisted in banding the 12 day old nestlings found in boxes. They began their fifteen years of service at the Noble Lone Star Ranch west of Philomath, but from 1996 through 2002, they monitored at Dave and Margie Buchanan's Tyee Winery south of Corvallis. The data from the records, compiled with that from other volunteers on the Trail, were sent to USFWS Bird Banding Laboratory, the North American Bluebird Society, Cornell University, Western Bird Banding Association, and ASC.

Bob and Ina's records provided material for ASC's publications that set the Bluebird Trail apart from other bluebird organizations. We do thank the Frasers and also their most generous memorial gift to the Trail! A special bluebird box, with a plaque dedicated to Bob Fraser, will be placed at Tyee Winery in his memory.

Karan Fairchild

Coots Unlimited

This spring, for the first time in the 15-year collective memory of the employees, American Coots have literally taken over the Malheur NWR Headquarter lawns! At least 100 Coots can be seen on any day. Some are so lazy, they lay down and munch the grass. Coot questions now outnumber the usual queries regarding the Yellow-headed Blackbirds! "What are those?"



American Coot photo by Matt Lee

Even the Great Horned Owl has been seen during the day snacking on Coot! The Belding Ground Squirrels do not seem to mind sharing the lawns with the Coots. Between the squirrel burrows and the Coot poops, you have to watch your step.

Greg and Andrea Foster

Board Meeting Summary

ASC Meeting

The Nominating Committee presented a slate of candidates to the Board for approval. The Board voted unanimously for the slate as presented. These candidates will be on the ballot at the May General Meeting.

The Conservation Committee presented information on the proposed state tax on bird seed. Revenue from this tax will go to fund a Non-Game person at Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife whose job it will be to pursue violations against birds (e.g. roller-pigeon fanciers who shoot hawks) and other non-game wildlife. The motion to approve ASC's letter of support for this tax passed unanimously.

The Board approved signing on to a letter to the Pacific Fishery Management Council supporting strong protections for forage fish in the proposed Pacific Fishery Ecosystem Plan.

Linda Campbell

Open ACS Board Meetings

ASC Board of Directors meetings are open to all ASC members, and the board encourages you to come and see what we do. Our monthly board meeting is on Thursday one week before the General Meeting. See the calendar on the last page of The Chat for meeting location.

Welcome New Members

Marie Martin
Bobby Rainey

Is it time to renew your ASC membership? Mail your renewal check to: ASC PO Box 148, Corvallis OR 97339. If there are no changes in your contact information, you can also renew your membership by going to the ASC website and renewing through Paypal: www.audubon.corvallis.or.us/join.shtml

If you have moved or changed your email address, please forward your new contact information to Suzanne Ortiz at ortizsv@gmail.com.

Suzanne Ortiz

Contributors to the Chat

Dave Mellinger, Bill Proebsting, Fred Ramsey, Don Boucher, Jim Fairchild, Raymond Drapek, Raylene Gordin, Marcia Cutler, Molly Monroe, Karan Fairchild, John Gaylord, Greg and Andrea Foster, Linda Campbell, Suzanne Ortiz, Lisa Millbank

Chat Articles

The Chat editors welcome monthly articles from all members of the Audubon Society of Corvallis. Please submit articles to the Chat editor by the 4th Thursday of the month. Always submit text using Microsoft Word.

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Interested in volunteering?

Please let us know: volunteerasc@gmail.com

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Audubon Society of Corvallis

the **CHAT**

Renew your membership before the date on the mailing label to avoid missing issues of the Chat.

Calendar

- May 3-5 Field Trip: Rogue Valley
- May 4-12 Natural Areas Celebration Week
- May 9 ASC Board Meeting, Hesthavn, 7 pm
- May 11 Field Trip: Finley NWR, 7:30 am
- May 11 Finley NWR Open House, 10 am – 3 pm
- May 12 Spring Migratory Bird Count
- May 16 General Meeting: First Presbyterian Church, Corvallis,
7 pm
- May 18 Hesthavn Work Party, 9 am
- May 23 Articles & Field Notes deadline for CHAT
- May 23-26 Field Trip: Malheur NWR
- May 26 Bicycle Birding, EE Wilson, 9 am



Osprey photo by Matt Lee

The Chat is published 10 times a year by the Audubon Society of Corvallis, PO Box 148, Corvallis OR 97339. Annual ASC memberships are \$25 for an individual; \$35 for a family; \$15 for student; \$15 for Chat only subscriptions (email delivery only); \$50 for Supporting Level; \$100 for Patron Level; and \$200 for Benefactor Level.

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